

NOSTALGIC 1950s EC COMICS!



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CANADA

# SHOCK

## SUSPENSTORIES



**THRILLING TALES OF  
TENSION**  
IN THE  
**EC TRADITION!**



BAV

# ...MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

A LITTLE WHILE AGO, I STOOD BESIDE MY BROTHER MARK IN THE MUSTY ANCIENT CHAMBER OF THE STATE SUPREME COURT, WHILE A HUNDRED CURIOUS RESISTFUL ANGRY ONLOOKERS STARED AT US. I FELT PUNISHED WITH SHAME, BUT MARK JUST LOOKED BACK AT THEM DEFIANTLY, SHEERLY RETURNING STARE FOR STARE. A MENACING DRONE HISSING IN THE COURTROOM, STILLED FINALLY BY THE RAPING SNAKE OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE. AND MARK REPEATED HIS LEATHROME CONFESSION... LAUGHED OUT HIS HORRIBLE ADMISSION... TAUNTING THE COURT AND THE SPECTATORS AND ME...

YES, I KILLED HER! I CHOKED HER WITH THESE TWO STRONG HANDS TILL HER FACE TURNED BLUE... TILL HER EYES BULGED FROM THEIR SOCKETS... BUT I TOLD YOU ALL THAT, YES, I DESERVE TO DIE. I WANT YOU TO EXECUTE ME. I DARE YOU.

WE, WE CAN'T EXECUTE YOU, IN ALL JUSTICE WE CAN'T! OH, LORD... WE ARE FORCED TO LET THIS MONSTER GO FREE!



MY OWN VOICE SOUNDED SHRILL IN MY EARS AS I SHOOKED TO MAKE MYSELF HEARD ABOVE MARK'S BOOING LAUGHTER...



HE MURDERED ALICE! I WATCHED HIM DO IT! YOU'VE GOT TO DESTROY HIM! YOU'VE GOT TO!

THIS COURT IS HELPLESS, FRANK DORAN! OUR HANDS ARE TIED! HIS EXECUTION WOULD NOT BE JUST! YOU KNOW THAT YOUR BROTHER IS BEYOND THE LAW!

SO, ALTHOUGH THREE JURIES HAD FOUND MY BROTHER GUILTY OF MURDER IN THE FIRST DEGREE, MARK DORAN WAS ABLE TO WALK OUT OF THAT COURT OF LAST RESORT AS A FREE MAN, PROTECTED FROM THE SNARLING SPECTATORS BY A GUARD PLANKING HIM ON ONE SIDE... WE ON THE OTHER...



THE GUARD ACCUSED MARK AND ME TO OUR WAITING CAR AND WATCHED US DRIVE OFF, SHAKING HIS HEAD. ALL THE WAY HOME, I COULD FEEL MARK LOOKING AT ME WITH THAT HEARTLESS SMILE...

ALICE LOVED YOU AND DISPISED ME. IT'S ALWAYS BEEN THAT WAY. **EVERYONE** LOVED YOU AND DISPISED ME. I NEVER REALLY CARED ABOUT IT TILL WE MET ALICE...

YOU'VE NEVER BEEN ANY GOOD, MARK! YOUR MIND HAS ALWAYS BEEN **WARRIED - EVIL!** THAT'S WHY YOU'RE **HATED!**



IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN THAT WAY WITH MARK AND ME. EVER SINCE WE WERE CHILDREN, THERE WAS THAT TIME WHEN HE TRIED TO TAKE MY SAILBOAT FROM ME, IT'D FOUGHT TO KEEP IT, AND OUR FATHER CAME RUNNING...



MARK'S INSOLENT SMILE HAD INSPIRATED FATHER. HE'D FLOWN INTO A BLIND RAGE. HE'D SLAPPED MARK AND CALLED HIM NAMES, BUT MARK WAS ONLY GLOWRED DARKLY AT HIM. MARK WOULDN'T GIVE FATHER THE SATISFACTION OF SEEING HIM CRY.

YOU **ROTTER** LITTLE **SNEAK!** YOU **TWISTED** HEARTLESS **LITTLE** **FRANK!**



I'D WEPT FOR FRANK. FOR THE BEATING FATHER JOE GIVEN HIM, AND FATHER HAD COMFORTED ME. PUT HIS ARM AROUND MY SHOULDER, AND TEARS HAD FILLED HIS EYES AS WE WALKED TO THE HOUSE.

FORGIVE ME, SON. I NEVER THOUGHT I'D STRIKE ONE OF YOU IN ANGER. IT HURTS ME - DEEP INSIDE... MORE THAN YOU'LL EVER KNOW!



YES, I HATED MARK. I HATED HIM WITH ALL MY HEART. AND YET I HAD TO STAY WITH HIM. I COULDN'T HELP MYSELF. HE WAS MY BROTHER.

I LOVED HER JOE, FRANK? I COULDN'T STAND HER BEING IN YOUR ARMS WHEN I LOVED HER SO MUCH! I TOLD YOU THAT BUT YOU WOULDN'T LISTEN. THAT'S WHY I **KILLED** HER. NOW SHE'S DEAD, AND ANYTHING OF US HAVE HER.

YOU DIDN'T LOVE ALICE, MARK. YOU ONLY **WANTED** HER BECAUSE SHE WAS **MINE**, JUST AS YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED **EVERYTHING** THAT WAS **MINE**.



MARK HAD DELIBERATELY SMASHED THE BOAT. I'D LOOKED AT FATHER THEN, AND SUDDENLY REALIZED THAT HE HATED MARK, TOO.

I GAVE YOU EACH A SAILBOAT, BUT YOU WEREN'T SATISFIED. YOU BITTERFUL WRETCH, YOU **BORE** YOUR BOAT AND COULDN'T WAIT TO **BREAK** FRANK'S!



WHEN WE'D REACHED THE HOUSE, FATHER'D STOPPED US. HE'D LOOKED AT ME WITH A TROUBLED FAN-ASSKY EXPRESSION.

WHATEVER HAPPENS, FRANK - ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT YOUR FATHER LOVED YOU...



I HADN'T QUITE UNDERSTOOD WHAT FATHER'D MEANT... NOT UNTIL DINNER.TIME. MOTHER'D CALLED HIM TO THE TABLE BUT HE'D NOT ANSWERED...



I'D KNOCKED ON FATHER'S DOOR AND RECEIVED NO ANSWER, AND OPENED IT, ONLY TO FREEZE IN HORROR AT THE SIGHT THAT GREETED ME. MY FATHER...RIPPING FROM THE CHAIR...*I SUICIDE*



MY HEAD HAD SPUN AND I'D HAVE PAINTED BUT FOR THE CHUCKLING MIRTH-FILLED VOICE AT MY SIDE. ALL AT ONCE I KNEW FATHER HAD TAKEN HIS LIFE BECAUSE OF MARK...AND MARK WAS DEAD...



MOTHER'S CAME ON THE RUN AT MARK'S OUTCRY SHE'S ALWAYS DOTES ON MARK. SHE LOOKED AT FATHER HANGING THERE...TURNED TO ME...AND SCREAMED.



I'D CRIED FOR FATHER, AND I'D MISSED HIM SO MUCH, I COULD FINALLY NO LONGER STAND THE CHANGING ACHE OF NOT HAVING HIM NEAR ME. I'D YEARNED TO BE WITH HIM, EVEN IN DEATH. THEN, ONE DAY, AS MARK AND I WALKED ON THE BRIDGE OVER OUR POND, I'D MADE UP MY MIND.



I'D HURLED MYSELF OVER THE RAIL INTO THE DEEP BROWN WATER, WANTING TO DIE... WANTING TO BE DEAD RATHER THAN LIVE IN THE SAME WORLD WITH MY BROTHER... WITHOUT MY FATHER. BUT BEFORE I COULD SINK, MARK'S STRONG ARM WAS AROUND MY NECK, KEEPING MY HEAD ABOVE WATER...



MARK HAD PULLED ME TO SHORE, AND I'D SAT SHAKEN AND SICK, HATING HIM FOR HAVING CHEATED ME INTO LIVING ON.



GRADUALLY, I'D GOTTEN OVER THE GRIEF OF MY FATHER'S DEATH, BUT I'D GROWN TO HATE MARK EACH DAY, JUST AS HIS CRUELTY HAD GROWN. I RECALL ONE AUTUMN DAY, AS WE WERE BURNING LEAVES IN THE INCINERATOR OUT BACK, MOM'S PERSIAN CAT HAD COME UP TO MARK, PURRING AND PURRING AGAINST HIS LEG.



HELLO, KITTIE!

MARK PUT HIM DOWN, MARK! FOR GOD'S SAKE!

AS TIME WENT ON, MOTHER HAD COME TO HATE MARK AS I DID, ALTHOUGH SHE'S NEVER ADMITTED IT. ONE NIGHT, AS WE WERE DRIVING GLORIA'S FILM HOME FROM A PARTY,

MARK FOR PETER'S SAKE! YOU'VE GOT NO RIGHT TO SUSPECT ANYTHING LIKE THAT TO A DECENT GIRL!

IT'S OKAY FOR OTHER GUYS, MARK. BUT I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH! GET OUT! GET OUT OF MY CAR.



AND THE NEXT DAY, A POLICEMAN HAD COME TO OUR HOUSE AND ARRESTED MARK. BUT THERE'S BEEN NO REASON FOR ME TO TESTIFY AGAINST MARK. HE READILY ADMITTED HIS GUILT...

SURE I HIT HER? I'S DO IT AGAIN IF I HAD THE CHANCE! SO ON! BOOM! ALLTHROW ME IN JAIL!

YOU'VE BURNED THIS GIRL'S FACE, MARK! YOU'VE RUINED OUT SEVERAL OF HER FEETH! I WANT TO THROW YOU IN JAIL!



BUT NOW CAN I? YOUR SON SHOULD BE CHASED UP LIKE AN ANIMAL, HIS DEATH BUT THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO - NOTHING ANYONE CAN DO! I FEEL SORRY FOR YOU AND FRANK.



BEFORE I COULD STOP HIM, HE'D THROWN THE CAT INTO THE LEAPING FLAMES. MOTHER CAME RUNNING AT THE SOUND OF THE POOR ANIMAL'S SHRIEKS OF PAIN.

I NEVER BELIEVED THIS OF YOU, MARK! BUT THIS TIME, I CAN'T YOUR FATHER WAS RIGHT! YOU ARE NO GOOD! YOU'RE MEAN, BRUTALLY MEAN! OH, WHY WAS I CURSED WITH A SON LIKE YOU?



GLORIA TUMBLED FROM THE CAR, STUNNED AND BLEEDING FROM HER BELLY WHERE MARK HAD STRUCK HER FURIOUSLY.

SHE'S MARK! MARK! YOU JUST CAN'T LEAVE HER HERE... ALONE FROM HOME!

OH, CAN'T I? JUST WATCH ME!



I'LL PAY FOR WHAT MARK DID! I'LL GO ON PAINING TILL THE DAY I DIE!

"TILL THE DAY I DIE," SHE SAID. IT WAS LESS THAN A WEEK LATER THAT I'D AWAKENED FROM A TROUBLED SLEEP, FEELING NERVOUS AND PARTIALLY PARALYZED.

MARK! I SMELL... COUGH... GAS!



WE'D RUN TO THE KITCHEN. MOTHER WAS THERE,  
SLAMMED OVER THE KITCHEN STOVE.



MOTHER'S LEFT EVERYTHING TO ME, BUT, THOUGH MY MIND  
FOR MARK WAS GREAT, I SHARED EVERYTHING WITH HIM...  
EVEN MY POPULARITY. EVEN THOUGH EVERYONE DESPISED  
HIM, HE WAS INVITED EVERYWHERE WITH ME.



I'D FALLEN IN LOVE WITH ALICE BENSON... HEAD  
OVER HEELS. ON THE WAY HOME FROM THE PARTY,  
I TOLD MARK...



MOTHER'S LEFT A NOTE  
FOR ME...



I'D LOOKED INTO MARK'S  
EYES, HOPING TO SEE SOME  
SIGN OF REMORSE, BUT HE'D  
ONLY SMILED AND SMIRKED IN  
COLD INDIFFERENCE.



THAT WAS FOUR MONTHS AGO. I WAS TWENTY-EIGHT  
WHEN I MET ALICE. I HAD THE SAME LONGING AS ANY  
MAN MY AGE, TO BE MARRIED, TO LOVE, TO BE LOVED.



ALICE AND I HAD SEEN A GOOD DEAL OF EACH OTHER  
BEFORE I COULD BRING MYSELF TO PROPOSE TO HER UP  
TO THAT TIME, MARK HAD SHOWN NO INTEREST IN MURRAY  
ALICE HAD ACTED AS IF MARK DIDN'T EVEN EXIST. BUT  
WHEN I ASKED...



MARK HAD INTERRUPTED OUR TENDER LOVE SCENE. HE SHOWED ME A SIDE, GRABBED ALICE.

I'VE STOOD BY AND WATCHED, BUT I'VE WANTED YOU TILL I ACHED, ALICE! I LOVE YOU! WE CAN'T HAVE YOU! I WON'T LET YOU!

LET ME... GO... MARK! PLEASE!



HE'S TRIED TO KISS HER, BECAUSE ALICE WAS MINE. MARK WANTED HER.

YOU FILTHY! YOU DISGRACING FILTHY!

WHY, YOU DIRTY LITTLE



MARK'S STRONG HANDS HAD FLOWN TO ALICE'S THROAT, CUTTING OFF HER AIR. CRUSHING. I FOUGHT VAINLY TO BREAK HIS HOLD...

LET HER GO, YOU DIRTY DIRTY! YOU'RE KILLING HER!



SHE WAS DEAD. MARK HAD KILLED HER. HE'D EVEN GIVEN A FULL CONFESSION. HE'D KNOWN THEY COULDN'T DO A THIRD TO HIM., THAT HE WAS BEYOND THE LAW. JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO, WE CAME HOME FROM THAT COURTROOM.

FOR ALL THESE YEARS, YOU'VE HAD A HOLD ON ME. YOU'VE DEFIED EVERY LAW OF DECENTY ONLY BECAUSE THE DECENT PEOPLE DIDN'T WANT TO HURT ME...

C'NON! I NEED A SHAVE!



AND I TOOK MY STRAIGHT-RAZOR AS MARK LAUGHED.

YOU WENT TO KILL ME. FRANK! DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH! YOU HAVEN'T THE GUTS! HOW NOW COULD YOU KILL ME?

LIKE THIS, MARK?



... AND I SLIT MY OWN THROAT!

AND I STOOD BESIDE MARK AS HE LATHERED HIS FACE AND WHEELED HIS STRAIGHT-AZOR AS COOLY AND AS CALMLY AS IF NOTHING HAD EVER HAPPENED...

WHAT'LL WE DO TONIGHT, FRANK? NOW ABOUT A SHOW!

YOU'RE BEYOND THE LAW, MARK! BUT JUST THE SAME YOU YOU'VE GOT TO BE PUNISHED FOR MURDER!



NOW I LIE BESIDE MARK, MY LIFE EBBING AWAY WITH EACH SCARLET DROP THAT OOOZES FROM MY SLASHED THROAT. AND I KNOW THAT JUSTICE IS DONE. FOR JUST AS SURELY AS IN LIFE, SO IN DEATH, MARK AND I WILL BE IRSEPARABLE. FOR IT IS MARK'S LIFE'S BLOOD TOO, THAT GUSHES FROM MY WOUND...



AND SO IT IS WITH GRAMSCIE TWINS?

THE END

# The HAZING

YOU MOVE AROUND THE FRATERNITY HOUSE OWNER TABLE ANYWAY, STOPPING AT EACH OF THE BROTHERS, WAITING FOR THEM TO CASH OUT THEIR STEAMING PLATEFULS OF WASHED POTATOES, POT ROAST AND PEAS. YOU FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE IN YOUR STARCHED-WHITE WAITERS' COAT AND YOUR HANDS TREMBLE NERVOUSLY, MAKING THE SERVING BOWLS ON THE TRAY YOU CARRY CLATTER TOGETHER IN A STACCATO RHYTHM. YOU'RE AFRAID, AREN'T YOU, WARREN FULLER? YOU'RE AFRAID YOU'RE NOT GOING TO PASS THIS PLEDGE PERIOD SUCCESSFULLY. THAT THEY'RE NOT GOING TO ACCEPT YOU INTO THIS FRATERNITY THAT YOU WANT SO MUCH TO JOIN... AND YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT.

AND HE SAYS TO ME, "BAGGUS... IF YOU DON'T PASS THIS QUIZ, I'M GOING TO FLUNK YOU FOR THE SEMESTER!"

FLUNK YOU? BUT THAT MEANS YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO PLAY FOOTBALL!

WHAT A FOTTEN TRICK! SPRINGING A QUIZ WITHOUT WARNING!

YOU LISTEN EARNESTLY TO THE CONVERSATION OF THESE UPPER CLASSMEN YOU SO ADMIRE... HANDING ON THEIR EVERY WORD... AND SOMEWHERE, DOWN DEEP, THE SPARK OF AN IDEA SPITTERS.

YOU'LL BE THE FAMED ONE! HE'S DROPPED UP FROM THIS FRAT. IF YOU ASK ME, HE'S GOT IT ON FOR US! HE FLUNKED OUT CHARLIE AND KNOCKED HIM OFF THE BASKET-BALL TEAM!

CRIPPER! WHAT'S A QUARTER-BACK GOTTA KNOW ABOUT MODERN ECONOMICS?

HEY, COULD LIKE TO SCREW HIM UP. JUST ONCE... BUT GOOD!



THE FLAME BURNS BRIGHTER. THIS IS YOUR CHANCE, WARREN. YOUR ONE CHANCE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT GETTING INTO THIS FRAT. YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO PROVE YOURSELF TO THE OTHER BROTHERS. SO YOU ANSWER:

I THINK I CAN HAVE PROFESSOR MILLSTONE FIRED! WOULD THAT BE OKAY WITH U?

LOOK, FULLER! YOU DON'T INTERRUPT WHEN WE'RE...

HOLD IT, FULLER! LISTEN TO THE BOY! DID YOU SAY "FIRED"? FULLER?





**MAKE YOUR DEAL, HARRIS, MAKE YOUR DEAL, AND WORRY LATER, YOU'LL THINK OF SOMETHING...**

**FULLER: YOU  
GET THAT ABOUT  
FIVED, AND WE'LL  
INSTALL YOU THE  
SAME ABOUT?**

AD-AD-  
WHAT A  
BLAST  
THAT  
WOULD  
MAKE  
ON THE  
CAMPUS!

YOU'RE  
DROPPED  
FROM  
PLEDGE  
OUTING...  
AS OF  
NOW,  
FOR LIFE

...FOR CHARLIE  
AND JANE... AND  
HOW WAS I?

I'LL LET YOU FEEL—  
LOVE AS GOOD AS  
DEATH AS I'VE GOT  
SOMETHING, SOMETHING

YOU WALK DOWN FRATERNITY ROW AND ACROSS THE CAMPUS TOWARD THE DORMS, YOUR HEAD BUBBLING WITH IDEAS, SCHEMES, PLANS. YOU'VE GOT TO DO THIS **RIGHT**, WARREN. IT'S NOW OR NEVER. YOU THINK ABOUT SELMA, YOUR OLDER SISTER YOU THINK ABOUT THAT **LETTER** SHE WROTE YOU...

"I'VE MET SOMEONE, WARREN... SOMEONE WONDERFUL. HE'S ASKED ME TO MARRY HIM. YOU KNOW WHAT THAT WILL MEAN. I HAVEN'T DECIDED YET. I WANT YOU TO THINK ABOUT IT TOO!"



SURE, YOU KNOW WHAT THAT WILL MEAN, WARREN. IF SELMA GETS MARRIED, SHE'LL **LOSE** HER JOB. AND THAT MEANS SHE'LL **STOP SENDING YOU MONEY** EVERY MONTH...

IT MEANS I'LL HAVE TO GET A **JOB**. AND MY CHANCES OF GETTING INTO THE PRAT WILL GO OUT THE WINDOW. THEY WON'T WANT ANYBODY WHO HAS TO **WORK** HIS WAY THROUGH COLLEGE.



SO IT'S NOW OR NEVER. IF YOU CAN GET INTO THE PRAT **BEFORE** SELMA GETS MARRIED, EVERYTHING WILL BE **OKAY**...

"DEAR DAD, I'D NEVER STAND IN YOUR WAY, SAY 'YES' TO THE DUTY. I'LL MARRAGE. LOVE, WARREN"



THE NEXT DAY, YOU PUT YOUR PLAN INTO OPERATION. YOU GO DOWNTOWN TO ONE OF THOSE MUSTY-SMELLING BOOKSHOPS, AND YOU PERUSE THE SHELVES...

"CAN I HELP YOU, YOUNG MAN?"

"I...I WAS WONDERING IF YOU HAVE ANY BOOKS BY MARX... OR ENGELS... OR LENIN..."



YOU FIND THEM. THE SHOPKEEPER EYES YOU SUSPICIOUSLY, BUT HE WRAPS THEM FOR YOU "GAS CAPITAL"... "THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO"... "THE WORLD REVOLUTION: DANGEROUS BOOKS, INCORPORATING BOOKS. PERFECT FOR YOUR REASON. BACK AT THE DORM, YOU SEND OFF A SUBSCRIPTION LETTER WITH CASH TO A COMMUNIST PAPER...

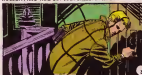
"PLEASE SEND ME A YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION TO 'THE DAILY WORKING MAN', I ENCLOSE THE AMOUNT NECESSARY. SEND IN PLAIN WRAPPER. JOHN MILLSTONE TEACHERS DORM BUILDING STATE UNIVERSITY"



ON SATURDAY, YOU WAIT AT THE RAILROAD STATION. PROFESSOR MILLSTONE ALWAYS TAKES THE NOON TRAIN ON SATURDAYS. YOU KNOW THAT. BUSINESS IN NEW YORK, YOU GUESS. WELL, YOU'LL CASH IN ON THAT TOO. YOU WATCH HIM BOARD IT.



THE TRAIN PUFFS AND WHISTLES AWAY INTO THE AFTERNOON. THE COAST IS CLEAR. YOU RETURN TO THE CAMPUS... ENTER THE TEACHER'S DORM BUILDING. THE LOBBY IS DESERTED. NO ONE IS AROUND ON WEEKENDS. YOU CLIMB THE BACK STAIRS TO THE THIRD FLOOR... WALK DOWN THE HALL TO PROFESSOR MILLSTONE'S ROOMS... AND TAKE OUT YOUR SKELETON KEY...



THE BROTHERS LOOK UP AS YOU STORM INTO THE FRONT HOUSE, THEY LISTEN WIDE-EYED AS YOU HAVE THE SKILL TOH KEY...



"GROW! I GOT THE PROOF!"

"WHAT'S THAT? AREY TO HIS ROOMS?"

"HOLY GOW! LET'S GO!"

YOU LEAD THEM TO PROFESSOR MILLSTONE'S ROOMS...THROW OPEN THE DOOR...



"JUST LOOK AROUND! LOOK AT THE BOOKS HE READ!"

"PHIL! DID THIS! THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO!"

YOU SHOW THEM EVERYTHING YOU'VE PLANTED...THE PAMPHLETS...THE BOOKS...THE COPIES OF 'THE DAILY WORKING MAN' YOU'D BOUGHT UNTIL THE SUBSCRIPTION CAN START...



"HE MUST GET THIS MAILED TO HIM! IT'S A COMMIE NEWS-PAPER!"

"WELL, FULLER! LOOK LIKE YOU WERE RIGHT! THESE BOOKS PROVE IT..."

"THEY'RE NOTHING! YOU KNOW WHERE HEDGES EVERY WEEK-END?"

YOU LIE! YOU'RE DESPERATE AND TIME IS SHORT, SO YOU LIE...



"HE GOES TO NEW YORK, MY SISTER SPOKE IN NEW YORK, I HAD HER FOLLOW HIM, HE GOES TO A COMMUNIST CELL MEETING EVERY WEEK!"

"OHAY, BOYS! LET'S GO TO WORK."

"LET'S FIX THIS COMMIE GOOD!"

AND SO IT BEGINS. THE BUNDLES. THE WHISPERING CAMPAIGN. IT SPREADS LIKE WILDFIRE OVER THE CAMPUS. FROM FRAT HOUSE TO FRAT HOUSE... SORORITY TO SORORITY...



"DID YOU HEAR? MILL-STONE'S A RED!"

"THAT'S RIGHT! THEY SAY HE'S A COMMIE AGENT SPYING ON THE LAB WORK WE'RE DOING HERE..."

...BUILDING AS IT GOES...ENHANCED BY PERSONAL TOUCHES...THE IMAGINATIONS OF THE GULLIBLE... THE SHADOWS OF THE GOSSIPS...



"THEY FOUND COMMUNIST LITERATURE IN HIS ROOMS... AND A PARTY CARD!"

"HE TRIED TO ORGANIZE A CELL... HERE... AT STATE!"

IT BECOMES AN EXPLODING FIRE... RAGING OUT OF CONTROL... READY TO CONSUME ANYTHING IN ITS PATH... EVEN THE INNOCENT...



"I CAN'T BELIEVE IT OF JOHN! I JUST CAN'T..."

"PERHAPS THIS WILL CONVINCCE YOU, DEAN CANNY. THIS WAS IN HIS MAIL THIS MORNING. I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF REMOVING IT. IT'S A PLAIN WRAPPED COPY OF 'THE DAILY WORKING MAN'! HE SUBSCRIBES!"

STUDENT ORGANIZATION  
STUDENT ORGANIZATION  
STUDENT ORGANIZATION  
STUDENT ORGANIZATION

AND THE LETTER THAT CAME IN YOUR MAIL THIS MORNING, WARREN. IT DOESN'T *STONER* YOU, DOES IT? YOU *KNEW* IT WAS INEVITABLE. BUT IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME NOW TILL THAT *INSTALLATION CEREMONY*...



LUCKY FOR US, FINALLY LANDED A FELLOW. YOU TOSSED THE LETTER ASIDE. YOU'VE GOT OTHER THINGS TO THINK ABOUT. LIKE THAT MEETING THE DEANS CALLED WITH YOUR PRAT FOR THIS AFTERNOON...



IT'S MONDAY MORNING... A LITTLE OVER TWO WEEKS AFTER YOU FIRST PLANTED THOSE INCORPORATING BOOKS IN PROFESSOR WILLSTONE'S ROOMS. THE FIRE BULLET IS RAGING... ABOUT TO EXPLODE...

YOU STAND WITH YOUR FUTURE FRATERNITY BROTHERS AND YOU WATCH THE INNOCENT LAMB BEING LED TO THE SLAUGHTER.



AS A MATTER OF FACT, DEAR GARY, I INTENDED TO SEE YOU TODAY. THERE'S SOMETHING I WANTED TO DISCUSS.



AND AS THE DOOR TO THE DEAN'S OFFICE CLOSED, YOU TURN TO THE STRESS AND SMILE...

LOOKS LIKE PAUL PLAYS FOOTBALL, DA FELLOW?

LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE GONNA BE A FOOTBALL FRATERNITY MAN, FULLER?



YOU CAN HEAR THE ANGRY VOICES COMING FROM THE DEAN'S LOCKED DOOR... THE LULL WHEN THE PHONE DIAL WHEEL BEGINS TO CRATTLE...



SOMEONE'S MAKING A CALL...

PROBABLY GETTING A LAWYER...

YOU HEAR THE PHONE RECEIVER BEING HUNG UP AGAIN... THE ANGRY VOICES RESUME. THE WALL CLOCK'S HANDS CREEP AROUND. THEN...



HELLO, WARREN?

HUH? SIS!

IT'S SELMA, STANDING THERE, HER EYES FILLED WITH TEARS...



WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, SIS?

JOAN CALLED ME! I... I CAME BACK WITH HIM LAST NIGHT. HE'S IN SOME KIND OF TROUBLE!



JOAN? I CAME BACK WITH HIM! I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

THAT WAS MY OTHER SURPRISE, WARREN... BOO. HE'S THE 'BOY' I WROTE YOU ABOUT. I MET HIM IN NEW YORK ABOUT A MONTH AGO. WE... WE WERE MARRIED LAST WEEKEND...

YOU STAND... STUNNED... AS SELMA GOES INTO THE DEAN'S OFFICE. THE WHOLE THING'S ABOUT TO BLOW UP IN YOUR FACE, WARREN. SHE'LL TELL DEAN CANNY HE NEVER FOLLOWED WALLSTONE. SHE'LL DENY EVERYTHING DO SOMETHING... BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE...



DON'T LISTEN TO HER! SHE'S A FINK!

WHAT THE...? NO ONE ASKED YOU TO COME IN HERE, FULLER!

THAT'S IT, WARREN. WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO LOSE? A SISTER? YOU LOST HER ANYWAY WHEN SHE GOT MARRIED. DON'T LET HER QUEER EVERYTHING FOR YOU NOW...



SHE'LL DENY EVERYTHING, BUT DON'T LISTEN TO HER. HOW DO YOU THINK I FIRST KNEW ABOUT HIM? SHE TOLD ME!

WARREN GOOD BOO!

THE DOOR IS OPEN. THE PLAT'S OUT THERE. THEY'RE LISTENING, WARREN. DO A GOOD JOB!



THEY'RE BOTH COMMUNISTS! BOTH OF THEM! THEY MET AT A GILL MEETING! THAT'S HOW I KNEW!

I THINK, PROFESSOR, THAT FOR THE GOOD OF THE UNIVERSITY, YOU OUGHT TO RESIGN THIS FACULTY POSITION IMMEDIATELY!

CAN YOU EVER FORGET THE LAZERS, WARREN? IN YOUR DREAMS...YOUR NIGHTMARES TO COME...WILL YOU EVER STOP BEING THE SHOCK?... THE HUNT...THE UTTER DEFEAT ETCHED IN THEIR FACES?...



WILL YOU EVER FORGET THE CHILL THAT RAN DOWN YOUR SPINE AS THEY WALKED FROM THE OFFICE, OUT ACROSS THE CAMPUS...HELPLESS...SPINSTER...



AND CAN YOU EVER FORGET THE EXPRESSIONS ON THE FACES OF YOUR FUTURE FRATERNITY BROTHERS WHEN YOU TURNED TO THEM...THE LOOKS IN THEIR EYES...



WILL YOU EVER FORGET THE WAY YOU LAUGHED, HELLOHLY...?



WILL YOU EVER FORGET, WARREN?



# A KIND of JUSTICE

SHE TRIED NOT TO THINK ABOUT IT, BUT THE PAIN AND THE SHOCK OF WHAT HAD JUST HAPPENED FILLED HER MIND. SINCE MORE SHE SAW HERSELF WAITING AT THE BUS STOP, UNEASY BECAUSE DARK HAD GIVEN WAY TO A BLACK MOONLESS NIGHT, SHE'D BEEN WAITING, ALONE... AND THE NEXT MOMENT SHE'D NOT BEEN ALONE. HE'D APPEARED OUT OF THE DARKNESS AND SHE'D SEEN THE LOOK ON HIS FACE. HE'D FORCED HER TO THE OLD SHACK BY THE QUARRY. SHE'D PLEADED AND SCREAMED, AND NOW IT WAS OVER. BUT IT WOULD NEVER BE OVER FOR HER... BECAUSE SHE'D NEVER FORGET...



THE MAN TURNED FROM THE DOORWAY TO THE SHACK AND SHUFFLED INTO THE NIGHT. SHE HEARD HIM STUMBLE AND CRASH AND GO ON. SHE GOT TO HER FEET AND RETCHED AND WAS SICK ON THE FLOOR BEFORE SHE STAGGERED OUT, CRYING AND SOBING...



SHE FOUND HER WAY BACK TO THE ROAD, BUT SHE DIDN'T WAIT FOR THE BUS THIS TIME. SHE WAS TOO AFRAID FOR PEOPLE TO SEE HER WHEN SHE HEARD IT COMING. SHE STOPPED BEHIND A TREE TILL IT WENT BY.



OVER AND OVER IT KEPT COMING BACK IN HER MIND...THE WAITING IN THE DARKNESS...THE MAN...THE SHACK. AND AGAIN AND AGAIN SHE HEARD HIS WARNING. SHE RAN, SCREAMING, THROUGH THE NIGHT. SHE WANTED TO BE HOME WHERE THERE WAS WARMTH AND LOVE. SHE ARRIVED...BREATHELESS...HESITATED AT THE DOOR...



WHEN SHE WENT INTO THE LIVING ROOM, JOHN HANSEN HURLED HIS NEWSPAPER ASIDE ANGRILY.

TEN O'CLOCK ONLY! SHIRLEY! SIXTEEN YEARS OLD. WHAT'S WROUGHT WHAT'S THE MATTER?



SHIRLEY COULD NOT ANSWER HER MOTHER'S QUESTIONS WITH WORDS. BUT HELEN HANSEN SAW HER DAUGHTER'S EYES, FILLED WITH RED AND ACCENTED BENEATH WITH DEEP BLACK CIRCLES. SHE SAW SHIRLEY'S HAIR, WILD AND TANGLED. SHE SAW SHIRLEY'S BODY TWITCH WITH EACH ANGUISHED SOB. SHIRLEY COULD NOT SPEAK, BUT TO HER MOTHER, THERE WAS NO NEED.



HELEN TOOK HER DAUGHTER'S SHAKING HAND AND LED HER UP THE STAIRS. JOHN HANSEN STOOD UNPLEASSED.

NOW SEE HERE! I THINK I DESERVE SOME SORT OF AN EXPLANATION FROM HER, HELEN, MUST YOU ALWAYS INSULT ME...



JOHN HEARD THE DOOR TO SHIRLEY'S ROOM SLAM SHUT. HE SCRATCHED HIS HEAD. NO, JOHN DIDN'T UNDERSTAND.



SHIRLEY SAW HIM AGAIN, STANDING IN THE DOORWAY TO THE SHACK. SHE HEARD HIS BRISTLY WARNING...





JOHN HEARD THE NOTE OF **ANGER** IN HIS WIFE'S VOICE, AND AS HE CLIMBED THE STAIRS HE SAW THE SLIMT OF **ANNE** IN HER EYES. HE THOUGHT THE HATE WAS FOR **JOHN** AND FOLLOWED HER **SECRETLY** INTO SHIRLEY'S BEDROOM. BUT WHEN SHE TOLD HIM OF THE TERRIBLE THING THAT HAD HAPPENED TO HIS DAUGHTER, HE BECAME THE **JAGGED LION... THE OUTRAGED FATHER.**



"SHE'LL TELL ME WHO IT WAS, BY GOD! I'LL MAKE HER TELL ME!"

"LEAVE HER ALONE, JOHN!"

JOHN SHOUTED AND BULLEDIED SHIRLEY, BUT SHE WOULD NOT GIVE HIM THE INFORMATION HE SOUGHT. CRYING SOFTLY, SHE COMEBED IN HER MOTHER'S EMBRACE...



"WHY WON'T YOU TELL WHO ARE YOU TRYING TO PROTECT? I'LL FIND OUT IF I HAVE TO BEAT IT OUT OF YOU!"

"STOP IT! STOP IT! CAN'T YOU SEE SHE'S AFRAID TO TELL?"

JOHN HANSEN COULD BORR THE CLEAK OF AUTHORITY WHICH SUFFICIENTLY AROUSED. HE STORMED DOWNSTAIRS, PULLING SHIRLEY AFTER HIM...



"SHE'LL TELL SHERIFF JAGGSON, BY GOD! I'LL SLAM IT OUT OF HER! AND WHEN I GET MY HANDS ON THE FILTHY DOG THAT DID IT, I'LL TEAR HIS FLESH FROM HIS BONY BODY!"

"NO! PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME BOAST TO YOU!"

"EVERYONE IN TOWN WILL KNOW, JOHN! DON'T YOU THINK SHE'S GONE THROUGH ENOUGH ALREADY?"

JOHN WAS DEAF TO THEIR PLEAS, AND TEN MINUTES LATER, WITH HIS FURY AT ITS PEAK, HE FORCED HIS DAUGHTER TO RELIVE HER EXPERIENCE FOR SHERIFF PAUL JAGGSON AND HIS DEPUTY, RUSSELL FORD...



"WHO BOLD IT, SHIRLEY? TELL US WHO IT WAS?"

"I... I CAN'T! FOR I CAN'T!"

SHERIFF JAGGSON TOOK SHIRLEY'S HAND AND DROVE WARMLY TO HER. SHE LOOKED AT THE FLOOR AND THE TEARS FILLED HER EYES...



"WAS IT SOMEONE YOU KNOW, DEARY? OR WAS IT A STRANGER? A VAGRANT...?"

"NO... NO..."

THE DEPUTY CURSED...



"THIS JUNT BERTIN US NOWHERE. THE KIDS BEGARED TO TELL. I SAY WE GO OUT AND BOUND UP SUSPECTS. I SAY WE BRING 'EM IN AND GIVE 'EM A SOUND OVER!"

"WE'LL GO ALONG! SHIRLEY WON'T BE AFRAID TO POINT HIM OUT WITH THE LAW ALONG!"

"YOU'D BETTER LET US HANDLE THIS, HANSEN! TAKE THE GIRL HOME!"

THE SHERIFF AND HIS DEPUTY WANDERED THROUGH THE TOWN'S DESERTED STREETS. AT AN ALL-NIGHT DINER, THEY SPOTTED THE STRANGER. HE SAT AT THE END OF THE COUNTER, STARRING... JUST STARRING...



"I SEE HIM! LET'S GO HAVE A TALK WITH HIM!"

THE YOUNG STRANGER SAT TENSE AS HE AND THE TWO LAWYERS MOVED TOWARD HIM SLOWLY. JACOB STOPPED ON ONE SIDE OF HIM... FORD, THE OTHER.



**HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN TOWN, MISTER?**

**HUH? COUPLE OF MONTHS, HUH?**

**YOU AIN'T BEEN IN *NEVE* THAT LONG? WHAT'D YOU GO TELL YOU GOT TO THIS PLACE?**



**WHY... I SIGHT MOST OF THE TIME LOOKIN' FOR A PLACE TO STAY. FIGURE ON GETTIN' A JOB HERE, HUH? WHAT'S *NEVE*?**

**MEET MY *BOSS*, STRANGER. YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?**

**WHAT'S YOUR *NAME*, SON? WHERE YOU FROM?**



**MY NAME'S *EDDIE NICHOLS*. I'M FROM *DETROIT*. NO *BLASON*. WHAT'S THE IDEA OF ALL THE *QUESTIONS*? I DON'T KNOW ANY *ONE* HERE! I'VE JUST BEEN IN *TOWN* A COUPLE OF *HOURS*!**

**MAYBE YOU BETTER COME ALONG WITH *US*, SON. IF YOU TELL US THE *TRUTH*, YOU WON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO *WORRY* ABOUT!**

EDDIE NICHOLS WENT ALONG EARLY ENOUGH, BUT HE WAS FRIGHTENED... REALLY FRIGHTENED. HE WAS A STRANGER IN TOWN AND HE FELT COLD UNFRIENDLY EYES UPON HIM.



**IF THIS IS A *PINCH*, DRAFT, I'VE GOT *NOTHING* TO HIDE. BUT I'VE GOT A *RIGHT* TO *KNOW* WHAT THE *CHARGE* IS!**

**YOU DON'T NEED US TO *DRAG* YOU NO *PICTURES*, *NICHOLS*! WE ASKED IF YOU MET A *GIRL* TONIGHT... A *YOUNG* GIRL! YOU FIGURE IT OUT!**

EDDIE NICHOLS GLANCED AROUND AND SAW HOSTILITY IN THE EYES OF THE OTHER CUSTOMERS. HE HURRIED OUT OF THE DINER WITH DEPUTY FORD, HERE ALLARD, THE COUNTERMAN, LEANED OVER AND CALLED SHERIFF JACOB'S *ARM*...



**SOME OF US GUYS GOT *DAUGHTERS*, HAH! IF THAT SAY *OLD* ANYTHING TO ONE OF THEM, WE OUGHT TONOWN WHO IT *WAS*!**

**WE'RE JUST TAKING *NICHOLS* IN FOR *QUESTIONS*, HERE! THAT DOESN'T MEAN HE'S *GUilty*. I HAVE NO *RIGHT* TO TELL YOU WAS THE *GIRL* IS. IF YOU WANT TO *KNOW* MORE, ASK *JOHN HANSEN*!**

THE SHERIFF LEFT, HERE TURNED...



***SHERIFF HANSEN*! THE *DIRTY* RAT GOT THE *HANSEN* *GIRL*!**

**SHE'S A *KID*, FIFTEEN OR SIXTEEN. SOMEBODY OUGHT TO CALL *JOHN*!**

**I'D LIKE *FIVE* *HUNDRED* ALONE WITH THAT *GUY*! I'D TEACH HIM...**

OUTSIDE THE DINER, EDDIE NICHOLS HEARD THE ANGRY WHISPERING AND WAS SUDDENLY STRIPPED WITH FEAR. HE TRIED TO MAKE A BREAK FOR IT, BUT THE LAWYERS WERE FAST...



**YOU'RE NOT BEING *SMART*, SON!**

**AN *INNOCENT* MAN DON'T TRY TO *LAW* OUT, *NICHOLS*!**

SHERIFF PAUL JUDSON WAS CALM AND EFFICIENT WITH HIS QUESTIONING. NOT AT ALL LIKE HIS SCOWLING CLUSTERING DEPUTY. FOR TWO SOLID HOURS THEY MILLED EDDIE NICHOLS, BUT HE DIDN'T BREAK DOWN.



IF YOU'VE BEEN IN TROUBLE BEFORE, WE'LL FIND OUT, NICHOLS!

GO AHEAD! FIND OUT! I'VE GOT NOTHING TO HIDE!

YOU'RE A PRETTY SNOOTY SNOOTY ASS, NICHOLS!

RUSS FORD PLACED THE CIGARETTE FROM THE SUSPECT'S LIP, TEARING AWAY A THIN FILM OF FLESH WITH IT.

YOU'D BETTER START SAYING SOME STRAIGHT ANSWERS, NICHOLS. WE GOT OTHER WAYS OF GETTING THE TRUTH!

WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO? LET YOU HAVE A STINKING POUND UP ON ME? I'VE LEVELLED WITH YOU! YOU'VE GOT NOTHING ON ME! YOU'VE NO RIGHT TO HOLD ME!



SUDDENLY, THE SHERIFF WAIVED HIS HAND FOR QUIET AND COOCHED HIS HEAD, LISTENING. THEN HE GESTURED TO THE DOOR AT THE BACK OF THE OFFICE...



LISTEN! HEAR THAT! THERE'S A MAN COMING HERE, TAKE NICHOLS BACK THERE AND LOCK HIM UP! WORK HIM FOR RADIANCE!

WELL, LET HIM GO, SHERIFF! HE SAYS HE'S INNOCENT!

NO, YOU'VE GOT TO LOCK ME UP! YOU'VE GOT TO PROTECT ME! YOU'VE GOT TO TELL THEM I'M THE WRONG MAN!



I DON'T HAVE TO TELL THEM ANYTHING, SON JUST TAKE IT EASY. NOBODY'S GOING TO HUNT YOU!

SHERIFF JUDSON STOOD ON THE JAIL-HOUSE STEPS, LOOKING OVER THE JAIL-CELLS...



YOU'VE GOT NO CALL COMING HERE LIKE THIS. THERE'VE LADS IN THIS STATE TO TAKE CARE OF THE GUILTY. AND THAT'S NOT SAYING THE SUSPECT IS GUILTY!

BUT HE IS A SUSPECT, JUDSON! DO YOU THINK HE'S THE ONE?

SHERIFF JUDSON LOOKED AT JOHN HANSEN AND AT THE HATE FROZEN ON HIS PALLID FACE...

AS YOUR FRIEND, JOHN... WELL, MAYBE I DO! BUT AS A SHERIFF, I HAVE NO RIGHT TO THINK ANYTHING! I'VE GOT TO BE SURE! I'VE GOT TO HAVE PROOF! ABSOLUTE EVIDENCE. ON A CONFESSION! NOW, YOU MEN GO HOME AND LEAVE NICHOLS TO ME AND RUSS...

ALL RIGHT, SHERIFF! WE'LL GO. BUT WE'LL BE BACK!



ALL THE NEXT DAY, MEN CAME TO THE HANSEN HOME AND LEFT JOHN KEYED UP. THE MEN LOOKED DIFFERENTLY AT SHERLEY AND SHE FELT WHAT THEY WERE THINKING, AND SHE HATED THEM, AND HER FATHER, TOO. THAT NIGHT JOHN MADE HER ODDS TO GO OUT...

WHY DOES SHE HAVE TO GO DOWN THERE AND PARADE HER SHAME?

I'VE CALLED JUDSON A DOZEN TIMES! HE'S GETTING AHEAD WITH THAT BUM. SHERLEY'S GOING TO SETTLE THIS ONCE AND FOR ALL!

SEN... SEN...





THE MOB WAS ROARING FOR BLOOD NOW, SOMEONE OUTSIDE POUNDED ON THE JAILHOUSE DOOR AND TELLED FOR THE SHERIFF TO BRING NICHOLS OUT. SHERIFF JUDSON SPOKE MORE QUICKLY... URGENTLY. HE PRESSED THE SHEET OF PAPER AND A PEN INTO THE SUBJECT'S HANDS.

OH, GOD? I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK THAT AT LEAST YOU RELIEVED ME!

LISTEN TO ME, EDDIE! SIGN THIS CONFESSION AND YOU'VE GOT A SAFE PASSPORT INTO THE COUNTY JAIL. I'LL BRING YOU OUT THE BACK WAY! MY CAR'S OUT THERE. YOU CAN TELL THE COURT YOU SIGNED IT UNDER DURESS. I'LL BACK YOU UP, EDDIE! I SWEAR I'LL BACK YOU UP!



A MINUTE LATER, SHERIFF JUDSON WAS HEADED FOR THE FRONT DOOR WITH THE SIGNED CONFESSION. HE SHOWED IT TO HIS DEPUTY, RUSSELL FORD, ON THE WAY. THEY GRINNED AND WINKED AT EACH OTHER.

IT ALWAYS WORKS, DON'T IT, SHERIFF? NEXT TIME, YOU BE THE VILLAIN... AND I'LL BE THE SHERIFF'S FRIEND!

NOW EVERYTHING IS NICE AND LEGAL, RUSSEL!



THE MOB OUTSIDE WAS A SCREAMING BELLOWING MASS OF ANGRY HUMANITY WHEN SHERIFF JUDSON FACED THEM AGAIN. AS HE HELD UP HIS HAND FOR SILENCE, A RESTLESS HUSH SETTLED OVER THE WILD-EYED MEN WITH THEIR CLAWS AND FISTS AND LENGTHS OF PIPE. JOHN HANSEN REPEATED AT THE LUNAR.

WE'VE HAD ENOUGH STALLING, JUDSON! LET MY SHWILEY SEE NICHOLS. SHE'LL TELL US IF HE'S THE ONE!

THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY, JUDSON! LOOK HERE! EDDIE NICHOLS HAS SIGNED A FULL CONFESSION!



SHERIFF JUDSON'S WORDS WERE LIKE A GREEN LIGHT SIGNAL TO THE MOB. THE WILD, IMPRISONING MOB, UNASHAMED OF ITS HATE-FILLED PASSION, THE SHOUTING MEN SURGED FORWARD IN A BLOOD-FRENZY, CARRYING BEFORE IT AN HYSTERICAL TESTIFIED MAN.

NO! NO! I DON'T WANT TO GO! DON'T MAKE ME GO IN THERE!

LET GO OF ME, SHERIFF! WE'VE GOT A DOG TO SETTLE WITH NICHOLS. MY DAUGHTER AND I...



THE MOB FURIED THROUGH THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE LIKE A STORM-BOSSSED WAVE.

HANSEN, YOU'RE A LUNATIC! WHAT YOU'RE DOING IS JUST ENOUGH WITHOUT MAKING THE BAD MATCH! O'MOM, SHWILEY! I'LL TAKE YOU HOME.

GRAY! GRAY! HEY! LET ME GET FIRST CRACK...



THE REVENGE-HUNGRY RIGHTIST MEN PUSHED FOOT DEPUTY RUSS FORD WHILE HE STOOD FLATFOOTED AGAINST A WALL, WITH A WILD, THRILL-FILLED LOOK ON HIS FACE...



"DO GET HIM! GIVE 'IM ONE FOR ME! OH, HOW I WISH I COULD BE IN THERE WITH YOU..."

BUT SHERIFF JUDSON COULDN'T HEAR EDDIE NICHOLS' SCREAMS AS THE LUNATIC WAS CRUSHED INTO HIS CELL. HE COULDN'T HEAR JOHN JENSEN SHOUTING LIFELINE. HEARD THE SOUND OF DRUMMING, CHEERING BOAT.



SHERIFF JUDSON COULDN'T HEAR THE SILENCE CLOSE IN AS EDDIE'S LAST SIGN CHOKED OFF IN A LIQUID GURGLE AND SOMEBODY WHISPERED...



"HE'S DEAD!"

EDDIE NICHOLS' TERRIFIED SCREAMS COULD BE HEARD ABOVE THE CLAMOR OF THE CHAILING DRUMS...



"SHERIFF! THE DOOR! YOU DIDN'T LOCK THE DOOR! HELP ME, SHERIFF! YOU SAID YOU WOULDN'T LET THEM GET ME! HELP!"

YAAAAA...

HE COULDN'T HEAR THE PUMMELING FISTS, THE HEAVY KICKS, THE LAUGHTER AND HOWLS OF DELIGHT COMING FROM THE JAILHOUSE WHERE AN INDIGNANT FATHER AND HIS FORTY-SOME PEOPLE WERE BEATING AND PUNCHING AND KICKING THE LIFE OUT OF AN INNOCENT MAN...



HE COULDN'T HEAR THE AIR-WARD HEAVY BREATHING AS THE MEN LEFT, GLAD IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT A KING OF JUSTICE HAD BEEN DONE...



HE COULD ONLY HEAR THE FRIGHTENED FAMILIAR BOMBING OF THE BOMB BESIDE HIM IN THE CAR PARKED IN THE DARKNESS MILES FROM THE SCENE. HE COULD ONLY HEAR THE SILENCE AFTER THE BOMB WENT OFF. HE COULD ONLY HEAR THE SILENCE...



"YOU WERE SMART NOT TO TALK BRIMLEY! REMEMBER! YOU TELL ANYBODY... AND I'LL KILL YOU!"

"I WON'T TELL! I PROMISE! PLEASE, SHERIFF! PLEASE... DON'T..."

# The PEN IS NIGHTTIER

A MOODY SUN SMILED DOWN ON THE TERRING CITY STREET, ILLUMINATING THE DRABNESS AND UNLIVED, REVEALING, WITH ITS GOLDEN GLOW, THE GRAY BOOT-STAINED TENEMENT BUILDINGS. IT BURIED DOWN ON THE YOUNG WHO TRIED TO FORGET THEIR GROWING HALF-EMPTY BELLYS BY PLAYING IN THE HORSE-FOULED, TRASH-LITTERED GUTTER. IT CAST WARM RAYS THAT DID NOT WARM THE BLACK HOPELESS EMPTY HEARTS OF THE OLD. THE FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD WITH SAD BROWN UNCRYING EYES WATCHED THE BLACK HORSE-DRAWN HEARSE LURCH AWAY. SOON THE SAME MOODY SUN WOULD SHINE ON AN UNMARKED FATHER'S GRAVE... THE GRAVE OF THE FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD'S FATHER. SON ZACK HAMLIN, THE SAD-EYED BOY, WAS ALONE IN THAT DRAB WELTER OF HUMAN MISERY... ALONE IN HIS PESTERING SLUM...

ZACK HAMLIN WAS ALONE IN THE LONELY WORLD OF POVERTY AND HUNGER. HE'D BEEN BORN TO IT... HE'D GROWN UP IN IT... AND HE'D HATED IT, DEEP INSIDE HIM, HIS RESENTMENT SMOULDERED... A SCATHING HATRED OF THE WRETCHED... THE HUMAN ORDS... THE NAMED BRUTALITY ALL AROUND HIM...



LIVING ON THE LITTER-STREWN SIDEWALK, ZACK HAMLIN'S MATE FOUND A THING TO CENTER ITSELF UPON... A BULLY... A TORMENTOR. AND TEARS CAME TO HIS EYES AT LAST... NOT FOR HIS LATE UNLAMENTED FATHER, BUT FOR HIMSELF...



EATEN AND KICKED... GOADED BY AN INSTINCTIVE  
CURIOUS... GOADED WITH SPITE AND MALICE... JACK  
HOPPED TO A NEARBY NEIGHBORHOOD... TO ANOTHER  
BULLY... AND: WITH MORE WORDS, HE PITTED BRU-  
GALITY AGAINST BRU-ALITY...

WHAT? SOMEONE  
SAID THAT ABOUT MY  
SISTER? WHO? TELL  
ME WHO? I'LL... I'LL  
KILL 'EM! TELL ME WHO  
IT WAS OR I'LL TWIST TO  
JAIL OUT OF ITS SOCKET

IT...IT WAS FRODO  
FROM BRANDELB  
DON'T TELL  
HIM I SAID ANYTHING



THEM, HE WATCHED THE VICIOUS BLOODY BATTLE OF THE  
BRUTES - A BANG FIGHT WITH KNIVES AND BROKEN BOTTLE  
AND BARE FISTS - BROUGHT ABOUT BY WORDS, ONE WORD



ZACK WATCHED THE POLICE COME, FINALLY, AND HERE THE TOWN BATTERED BRUTES INTO A PATROL WAGON. HE SAW EDDIE, HIS LIFE DRAINING AWAY, BURNING RED FROM A GOREN JACOB WOUND, CARRIED TO A HASTILY SUMMONED AMBULANCE, AND ZACK HAMLIN SMILED. EDDIE, HIS TEMPTORER, WAS OFFERED. ZACK HAMLIN HAD LEARNED THE POWER OF WORDS.



ZADE TURNED HIS BACK ON THE BLAZE THAT DUE HE LEFT FOREVER, BUT HE CARRIED SOME OF ITS HUNGER AND LONGEVITY WITH HIM. HE SEDDED AND SCORCHED FOR FOOD, AND WHEN ALL, BLAZE RILED, HE STOLE, AND WAS CAUGHT

LEAST LITTLE JEWEL-  
FAIRER THE SECOND  
MY BACK IS TURNED,  
HE GRABBS!

LET ME  
GIVE  
YOU

MADE THE  
MIS ADVANCE  
MR. KING, HERE  
THAT WANT  
TO CHANGE IT.



COMMON, AND I'LL BUY  
YOU A MEAL. YOU LOOK  
LIKE YOU HAVEN'T EATEN  
IN A MONTH.

I-I



5-D ZACK FOUND A FRIEND...A REPORTER NAMED JOHNNY HARRIS...WHO FED HIM AND TOOK HIM HOME AND GOT HIM A JOB AS A COPY-BOY WITH HIS PAPER...

**GOOD BOY, JACK!**  
**KEEP MOVING THAT**  
THE WAY! HERE... TAKE  
THE CAR, BEHOLD THE



AND JACK KEPT MOVING. HE WAS FULL OF GRATE OUTWARDLY, HE OVERFLOWED WITH GRATITUDE FOR HIS BENEFACTOR, BUT INWARDLY, HE DESPISED HIM AND WATCHED HIM WITH HUNGER EYES AND THE INSTINCT OF A JACKAL.





ZACK WATCHED AND WAITED AND PLANNED. IT WAS THREE YEARS TILL HIS CHANCE CAME. HIS FRIEND, HIS BENEFACTOR, JOHNNY HARRIS, CAME BACK FROM AN EXTENDED LUNCH HOUR THAT DAY, ROARING BLOOD...

GOTTA GEDA STORY OUT, KID! ALMOST DEADLINE! IM THERE'N BUTHIN' I WRITE ABOUT!

SIT DOWN, JOHNNY! FUFF!



JOHNNY HARRIS, SUFFERING FROM HIS OCCASIONAL DIZZINESS, NEVER TOUCHED HIS TYPEWRITER. HE SLUMPED DOWN INTO THE CHAIR AND SLIPPED INTO OBLIVION, AND ZACK TOOK OVER....



ZACK HAMLIN WROTE THE STORY. AND WHEN IT REACHED THE CITY EDITOR'S DESK, ZACK WAS CALLED IN...

HARRIS DON'T WRITE THAT! YOU DID. WHERE IS HARRIS? ANSWER ME!

HE'S IN HIS OFFICE. HE... HE ISN'T FEELING GOOD! I DON'T WANT HIM TO GET INTO PROBABLE...



NOT FEELIN' GOOD, END WELL, YOU CAN KEEP ON WRITING FOR HIM, HAMLIN. I'VE WARNED HIM. I TOLD HIM ONE OF THESE DAYS HE'D DRINK HIMSELF OUT OF A JOB! HE'S FARTHER, HAMLIN... YOU'RE TAKING HIS PLACE...



THE SUBTLE, THE CRUEL, THE SAVAGE STRENGTH OF WORDS. THEY WERE ZACK'S WEAPON... HIS POWER. BUT MORE YEARS PASSED BEFORE HE KNEW WHAT POWER HE HAD. THERE WAS SOMETHING THEN CALLED PROHIBITION, AND THERE WERE MEN CALLED BOOT-LEGGERS WHO FOUGHT DEADLY WARS OVER WHO SOLD ALCOHOL TO WHOM, AND WITH UNCRANNY INSTINCT, THE REPORTER, ZACK HAMLIN, WOULD BE THERE TO SEE...



THE KILLERS HAD FLED... ALL BUT ONE... A YOUNG FUNK NAMED VAUGHN... MARNY VAUGHN, HE AND ZACK FROCE EACH OTHER IN THAT BODE-SPLAT-TERED WAREHOUSE. THE GUNMAN LEVELLED AN AUTOMATIC AT ZACK'S CHEST...

YOU SAW A LOT, HAMLIN? YOU SAW TOO MUCH!



WIDE UP, WARD! THE COPE WE'RE TIPPED! THEY'RE RIGHT BEHIND ME! HAND OVER THAT GUN! QUICK!

TEN SECONDS AFTER ZACK HAD FOXGOTTED VAUGHN'S GUN, THE POLICE WERE SWARMING INTO THE WAREHOUSE...

WHAT CITA BOAN VAUGHN WASN'T IN ON THIS MASSACRE, HAMLIN? HE'S DUTCHS FINDER, AND DUTCH HAD IT IN FOR THIS MOP!

WHAT'D VAUGHN GOT IN WITH, DEL AMET... HIS FINDER? YOU FANNED HIM! YOU DON'T FIND A GUN? MARNY WAS WITH ME! HE WAS BEYOND ME UPTOWN, WE HEARD SHOOTING, THAT'S HOW IT WAS. I'D SWEAR TO IT IN COURT!



THE POLICE LEFT... WITHOUT THEIR KILLER. ZACK  
HAD TURNED THEM AWAY WITH WORDS... JUST WORDS.

I DON'T FORGET  
FAVOURS, HANSEN.  
BUT, WHY? WHY  
STICK YOUR NECK  
OUT FOR ME?

I DON'T KNOW, MANNY. MAYBE  
I WANTED TO SEE IF I COULD  
GET AWAY WITH IT. MAYBE I DID  
IT BECAUSE WE'RE BOTH AFTER  
THE SAME THINGS... MONEY AND  
POWER? WE JUST HAVE DIFFERENT  
WAYS OF GOING ABOUT IT...

ZACK HAD PICKED HIMSELF A VALUABLE FRIEND IN  
MANNY VAUGHN, POP OF THE MIDDLE TWENTIES, THE  
MUSCLEMAN HAD POUNDED HIS WAY TO THE TOP OF THE  
SCOTTLE NEAP. MANNY MADE MILLIONS. AND ZACK...  
WELL, ZACK STILL HAD HIS WORDS...

WELL, NOW YOU  
LIKE THE SET  
UP, ZACK?

WELL, MANNY? BUT WHAT ABOUT  
THE LANDLORD? THIS IS A PRETTY  
FINEY MESSY BUSINESS FOR A  
BREAKFAST?

I GOT FANCY CUSTOMERS, KID.  
THEY DON'T LIKE DRINKIN' IN NO  
RAT HOLE, SO THEY COME HERE.  
ANYHOW, I OWN THE WHOLE  
BUILDING? UH-HO, ZACK? I GOT  
A COUPLE OF BILLS...

THAT'S WHERE ZACK MET KITTY  
DIXON. KITTY WAS FOUR YEARS  
OLDER THAN ZACK... A FLASHY  
BLONDE... REAL PRETTY...

WE'RE A GOOD PAIR, ZACK AND ME.  
I GOT THE DOUGH... ZACK'S GOT  
THE POWER. EVERY BISHOP IN  
TOWN SUDDS AROUND HIM. ZACK'S  
GOT POWER, ONLY HE DON'T  
KNOW IT!

ZACK'S GOT WORDS. AND HE'S GOT  
THE BARK EXAMINED TO PUT 'EM  
IN. THAT'S POWER. HE'S GOT THE  
LORDSHIP ON EVERY MAN AND  
POLITICIAN IN THE STATE. THEY  
EAT OUT OF HIS HAND. ZACK CAN  
MAKE OR BREAK  
A DOZEN GUYS  
LIKE ME WITH A  
FEW WORDS!

NOT YOU, MANNY!  
NOT MY BEST  
FRIEND!

THAT'S WHAT I HAD ENGRAVED ON THIS  
CIGARETTE CASE. "TO ZACK, MY BEST  
FRIEND." IT'S PLATINUM, ZACK, COST  
ME FIVE 'O'S! AND YOU KNOW WHAT  
THIS SET INSIDE IN? THERE'S AN  
APARTMENT FOR YOU IN THIS BUILD-  
ING... FURNISHED! WHIT'LL YOU  
SEE IT!

MANNY, I  
DON'T WANT  
ANYTHING  
FROM YOU.

IT'S A SWEET-LOOKING  
JOINT, ZACK, AND  
KITTY HERE, GOES  
WITH IT!

OH, WELL.  
THAT'S DIS-  
FERENT! NO  
GENTLEMAN  
COULD REFUSE.

WELL, I HOPE  
YOU'RE NOT  
TOO MUCH  
OF A  
GENTLEMAN.  
ZACK, MANNY.

MIRRY BELONGS WAS WRONG, THEN. JACK HAMLIN **KNEW** HE HAD POWER IN HIS GRASP. BUT JACK WAS **SIDING** HIS TIME. HE FOUND HIS CHANCE SIX MONTHS LATER...

I TALKED TO ONE GUY AND THE WHOLE PAPER DOES BUTTS. YOU KNOW THE LINED LARS, HAMLIN, YOU KNOW BETTER THAN TO WRITE THIS JUNK ABOUT HOWARD GARDSON BRING THE MONEY-BAG BEHIND THE BOOTLEES RING? HE'S 'FAKE AGENCY', HAMLIN! HE'LL SUE US RIGHT OUT OF BUSINESS.

GARDSON? HOWARD GARDSON? NO I SAID THAT ABOUT HIM!



IN ONE LINE YOU SAY "WHAT HARK AGENCY PLAYBOY IS PUTTING UP THE LOGO FOR A SHAKY BOOTLES EMPHIRE" AND AFTER A COUPLE OF DOFS, YOU SAY "ILLUMINARI HOWARD GARDSON IS PUTTING HIS COUGH INTO LIQUID ASSETS FOR A QUICK TURNOUT!"

SO WHAT? 'LIQUID ASSETS' DOESN'T MEAN LIQUID! NOT ON WALL STREET! WE'RE CLEAR, ARSON, IT'S TRUE! EVERYBODY. I'M TRYING TO DO SOME GOOD IN THIS WORLD!



GOOD? YOU CALL A LOT OF DIRTY GOSPEL ABOUT GREAT STORIES AND THEN MARRIED BOFFYFRIENDS GOOD? YOU WANT ME YOU BETTER GO BACK, YOU'LL FIND SOME FELLOW HAS TO PUT THIS FRASH INTO HAMLIN!

OKAY, MR. HALL! I DON'T NEED YOU ON THE DAILY EXAMINER, WHEN YOU WANT ME BACK, YOU'LL PAY MY ASSES!



THE NEXT MORNING, THE DAILY EXAMINER WAS A SELL-OUT. AND EVERYONE KNEW WHY, INCLUDING ITS PUBLISHER WHO MADE EDITH MR. HALL CRAWL...

ALL RIGHT, HAMLIN! NAME YOUR PRICES! WHAT? TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY A WEEK? LISTEN, I DON'T GET THAT MUCH! BUT... DON'T HANG UP! OKAY? OKAY, TWO-FIFTY! HUH? DEAR... ANYTHING YOU... SAY...



SO JACK HAMLIN CAME BACK TO THE EXAMINER. AND HE WAS A POWER NOW...

HEY, JACK! ON THIS BARONETTI BUSINESS, IT'S PRETTY ROUGH! I THINK WE...

NEVER WARD WHAT YOU THINK, MR. HALL! WHAT I WROTE ABOUT BARONETTI IS TRUE. YOU SEE THIS TELEGRAM? IT'S FROM A NEWS-PAPER SYNDICATE. THEY WANT TO HANDLE MY COLUMN.



POWER? YES, JACK HAMLIN HAD POWER. HE WAS POWER. HE EXERCISED POWER. HE WAS A FORCE FOR GOOD. HIS OWN KIND OF GOOD. THIS MAN WAS GOOD... WITH A SMALL 'V'...

NOT ONLY HERE, BUT ALL OVER THE COUNTRY! THEY KNOW HE... THEY WANT ME TO POINT OUT THE TROUBLES... THE CRISIS, I'VE GOT 'EM ON THE FRONT!

YOU'VE GOT WORD ON THE RUN, HAMLIN? NOT THE CHICKENS WHO LICK YOUR ASSES. NOT A LAWYER! LIKE MURRY RAGGINS? NO! HE GOT YOU THAT SYNDICATE OFFER. SO HE'S A GREAT GUY!



THAT NIGHT, JACK WENT TO SEE MIRRY

SURE, JACK! I WAS DENYING THAT OFFER. I HAD TO GO INTO THE SYNDICATE TO SWINE IT. BUT WHAT'S GOOD FOR I GOT FAITH IN YOU, JACK!

YOU MEANT WELL, MIRRY. BUT I WANTED TO MAKE IT ON MY OWN!



SO YOU **PUSHED** THINGS, SO WHAT? I GOT THE **ONE** THING I **NEED**, THANKS TO YOU, MANNY! A **STAND- GATED COLUMN** WILL BRING IN **MONEY** BY THE **BUSHELFUL**. **MONEY** AND **POWER**!

**MONEY IS** **POWER**, ZACK! **POWER**'LL **SEE**? I'VE MADE **FOOT** I'LL **MAKE OTHERS**! I'LL MAKE **SENATORS** AND **GOVERNORS**. I'LL **BUY** THIS COUNTRY, ZACK, AND I'LL **RUN IT MY** **WAY**!



ZACK HAMLIN WAS READ THROUGH- OUT THE COUNTRY AND THE MONEY ROLLED IN... HIS MONEY. MANNY VAUGHN'S AMBITIONS ALWAYS INCLUDED RICHEST FRIEND. ONE DAY THEY WENT TO THE FEDERAL BROADCASTING SYSTEM'S OFFICES.

I'LL SEE TO IT ZACK GETS THE **SPONSORS**, BROTHER... SO YOU GOT NOTHING TO **WORRY** ABOUT! RIGHT?

NOTHING EXCEPT **LARRY JAMES**, BUT IF YOU SAY SO, MANNY, I'LL **SAVE** HIM THE AIR TIME...



ZACK HIT THE AIR WITH HIS WORDS, AND WITH THEM HE **POISED** THE NATION. **DRIVE, DRIVE, DRIVE** OUT THE TIMORONS AND CROSS. AN **ABROUGHTLY** ACQUIRED MAN LEAPED TO HIS DEATH, BUT EVEN A "GOD" CAN MAKE ONE MISTAKE...

...THE CALIFORNIA INITIALS L.O., REPEAT, INITIALS L.O., IS GETTING STRONG LACKING IN HIS BID FOR THE GOVERNORSHIP. GET THIS, MR. AND MRS. CALIFORNIA, I'VE CHECKED THIS MAN'S SOURCE OF INCOME. YOU SHOULD KNOW WHERE HIS MONEY COMES FROM BEFORE YOU GO TO THE POLLS. LOCAL PAPERS, PLEASE NOTE!



ANOTHER EXPOSE... ANOTHER RUINED LIFE. BUT ZACK HAMLIN HAD SAVED THE VOTERS OF CALIFORNIA.

IT WENT **ALL** NIGHT TONIGHT, OH, MANNY! YOUR **SHOPS** IS PRACTICALLY **IN** OUT THERE! I...I...

THIS IS **AREZ**, ZACK! I FEEL **SAD**! HER IS A **SURPRISE**. AREZ AND WE ARE GETTING **MARRIED**!



WELL! NOW YOU'VE GOT **EVERYTHING**, MANNY! SHE'S VERY **LOVELY**!

WHY, **THANK** YOU, MR. HAMLIN!

LOOK, ZACK! I'M BUYIN' A BIG PLACE OUT ON THE ISLAND. AREZ AND ME WANT YOU TO COME OUT THERE **AN** **LIVE** WITH US. IT'D BE **LOST** WITHOUT YOU, ZACK...



THINGS HAPPENED THAT YEAR. IT WAS 1939 AND ZACK HAMLIN WAS WIFED OUT IN THE GRASS. SO HE WENT OUT TO LIVE WITH THE VAUGHNS. ZACK WAS BROKE, BUT HE STILL HAD HIS POWER, AND NEW MONEY KEPT ROLLING IN.

A **TOAST**! TO THE MAN WHO **MADE** ME WHAT I **AM** TODAY!

YOU MAKE ME **BLISS**, ZACK! AFTER ALL, THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR.



IT HAPPENED IN 1937. IT WAS NIGHT. MICE VAUGHN, MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN EVER, HAD GONE TO BED. THE DOOR TO MANNY'S ROOM OPENED. MANNY TURNED, SAW THE SLAM, A SPECIAL ENGRAVED GUN... A **LUCKY**. A SHOT RANG OUT.



MANNY NEVER MADE A SOUND AS HE WENT DOWN WITH THE BLOOD SPURTING FROM THE HOLE IN HIS CHEST...



ZACK WAS SHOCKED AT HIS FRIEND'S COLD-BLOODED MURDER. HIS PLACE KNEW NO BOUNDS. ZACK USED HIS POWER TO AVENGE HIS FRIEND'S DEATH...

I WANT *EVERY BIT* OF THAT SOB! IN MY COLUMN THE WAY I *DICTATED* IT, YOU HEAR? I'LL *RUN* THE MURDERING RAT INTO THE *GROUND*. AND I'M GOING TO DEVOTE MY WHOLE *BROADCAST* TO MANNY, TONIGHT!



DRIVE, DRIVE, DRIVE! ZACK DROVE WITH ALL THE POWER OF HIS COLUMN AND HIS BROADCASTS. HE DROVE THE POLICE, AND WHEN THEY FAILED TO FIND A SUSPECT, ZACK HAMLIN FOUND ONE...

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THIS MAN... *NESDO WALLACE*, ONCE WAS A MEMBER OF A BOOTLESS GANG THAT WAS *MASSACRED* DURING *PROHIBITION DAYS*. HE BLAMED *MANNY VAUGHN*, A GOOD CLEAN-LIVING AMERICAN, FOR HIS MEN'S DEATH. *THERE'S YOUR MOTIVE? REVENGE!*



NESDO WALLACE WAS ARRESTED AND PUT ON TRIAL. HE HAD ALIBI WITNESSES, BUT ZACK HAMLIN HOUNDED THEM UNTIL, ONE BY ONE, THEY DROPPED AWAY. THEN ZACK HOUNDED THE COURT BART...



HE FIND THE DEFENDANT... *GUILTY* IS *CRIMINAL!*

MY GOD! SOMEBODY BELIEVE ME! I'M *CLEAR!* I *SWEAR* IT!

THE NIGHT AFTER THEY BLINDED NESDO WALLACE IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR, ZACK HAMLIN WENT ALONE TO PAY HIS RESPECTS TO INEZ VAUGHN, THE SCREAMED WIDOW. SHE AND ZACK WENT TO THE CELLAR TOGETHER...



*FORNITY*? MANNY *LOVE* WE TWO FOR MY BIRTHDAY LAST YEAR, INEZ?

*PLEASE, ZACK! THROW IT IN THE FIRE! GET RID OF IT!*

ZACK CHUCKLED AS HE WEIGHED THE GEM IN HIS BRIDES HAND. IT WAS A FINE GEM... A SPECIAL, HANDSOMELY ENGRAVED LIEBER...



THERE'S *HOPE* FOR YOU! OH, NOW I'D LOVE TO WRITE *THIS* STORY! BUT I *NEVER* WILL!

THROW IT INTO THE *FIRE*, ZACK!

ZACK TURNED AND TOSSED THE GEM WITH WHICH HE'D BLINDED MANNY VAUGHN INTO THE FURNACE. THEN HE TOOK INEZ INTO HIS ARMS IN A PASSIONATE EMBRACE...



OH, ZACK? ZACK? I *THOUGHT* I'D HAVE TO WAIT *FOREVER!*

I'D HAVE KILLED A *DOZENS* MANNY VAUGHNS FOR YOU, INEZ!

AND SO IT IS WITH 'GODS'. THEY STAND ABOVE US MORTALS AND THEY PULL THE STRINGS. THEY CAN *DO NO WRONG!*